

NOGALES TRANSIT FEASIBILITY AND IMPLEMENTATION PROJECT

Stakeholder Interview

Name of Interviewee: Julian Villegas
Agency: Holy Cross Hospital
Date of Interview: May 10, 2006, 10:00AM
Follow-up Needed? Mr. Villegas to provide hospital's White Paper on transportation issues (see attached).

1. Do you currently use the existing shuttle buses operating within Nogales? How often and for which trips?

No.

2. Do you know people who use the shuttles? If so, who are they? How often do they use the shuttles and for which trips?

Maybe residents and Mexican nationals use the shuttles to get to medical appointments at the hospital.

3. What are the biggest drawbacks of the existing service? (i.e., doesn't go enough places, doesn't operate frequently enough or early/late enough, service is unreliable, cost is inconsistent)

The shuttles are unreliable and don't provide regular service to the hospital. This means even if patients can get to the hospital, they have no way back home or to the border. Many walk and many pay more than they can afford for taxi cabs.

4. Do you know people who would use a different system? Who are they? Would you use a different system?

Many hospital patients already want a better system. Once the hospital moves to Ruby Road, this will be even more important.

5. If you could make your own system, what would you choose?

a. Where would it go?

Ruby Road, Border/Downtown, Grand Avenue, Western Avenue, Monte Carlo, Chula Vista, Rio Rico, and Tupac.

b. How frequently would it run?

Every thirty minutes during the peak hours; every 1-2 hours off-peak.

c. How early would it start and how late would it go?

6:30AM till 6PM to serve hospital appointments, plus later in the summer. Additional service should be available for the hospital shifts (7AM-7PM and 1PM-9PM, 9PM-5AM, 5AM-1PM)

d. What about weekends and holidays?

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Minimal service needed on weekends and holidays for the hospital.

e. How much would you pay?

No more than \$2.00, but \$1.00 would be much better.

6. If the transit system did everything you listed above, would you use it? How often and for which trips?

Hospital patients would definitely use it.

7. If not, could anything be done for you to use transit?

Not applicable.

8. Would the service you recommended be the system needed by others in Nogales?

Yes.

Nogales Transportation White Paper

Nogales City Transportation

Currently there is no City of Nogales bus transportation system. The majority of transportation is provided by independent businesses. There are three (3) types of commercial transportation provided to move people from within the city. These are independent shuttle vans, city buses, and commercial taxis.

City Buses:

There are two companies that provided information on the commercial city wide bus services.

Dabdoub Transportation:* The company is owned and managed by Virginia Dabdoub. They have six (6) buses that followed established routes within the city limits. The routes provide transportation from the border to three (3) designated routes. Transportation every hour on the hour from 0800 to 1700.

- a. Hospital route: They provided transportation from the border to Holy Cross Hospital. Services ended for this route due to City ordinance new ruling, which prevented Dabdoub buses from stopping and dropping off people as before on the corner of the entrance at Holy Cross. The fee was \$1.00.
- b. Terrazas route: This includes transportation from the border to Grande Avenue to the intersection going to Patagonia.
- c. Chula Vista Route: This includes from the border to Grande Avenue to as far as “Pete’s Kitchen”. This also includes all commercial business stops, i.e., Malls, in route to Monte Carlo to Chula Vista.
- d. NEW Rio Rico Route: A new route if permitted by the city will be proposed, to pick-up people at the border and travel on I-19, North to a drop-off point in Rio Rico.

***Currently not providing services.** Meeting with city officials August, 2005 to discuss permission to continue services. Currently there are only three designated “legal” bus stops approved by the City. These are by the Americana, Denny’s and by Plaza Alamo.

Compadres City Bus: This company is owned/managed by Juan Osorio, There are three (3) buses that follow the same routes from 0700 to 1900. The city bus picks up passengers at the border and follows the Chula Vista route as above. They will drop people at K-Mart, Walmart, J.C. Pennys, Hometown, and any commercial business in its route. Mr. Osorio did state that the City of Nogales mandated a few years ago to only make stops at designated bus stops. He is willing to negotiate stopping at any drop point if permitted by the City. Currently they charge \$3.00 per trip at any point. They do not drop people at Holy Cross due to low volume. He is willing to discuss.

Shuttle vans: There are Many shuttle vans in the City, The primary routes for the majority is to move people from Nogales to the Casinos, to Tucson and to Phoenix. They will also transport people within the city for a fee, but main business interest it to move people from city to city. Independent business also provide “free” shuttle from the border to specific stores. An example is Food City. They provide a “free” ride at the border to Food City and back to the border. The only comment from customers is that the wait time is unpredictable and not on schedule on returns to the border.

Another shuttle service called Natis Shuttle Nogales, will also take people to specific locations in the City but at a higher rate than buses, but main business is to take people to Tucson and Phoenix. Cost for their services to take individual to Rio Rico in route to Tucson is \$12.00. Linea Frontera -The only provider to pick people at the border and drop off at two (2) location in Rio Rico. These drop-off locations are at Pilot Service Station and at Chevron Service Station on their way to Tucson. The cost for a ride to Rio Rico is \$12.00.

Note: For the Santa Cruz community, there is a program funded by the state, that is quite unique, that may benefit the majority of the elder population in the County. In the county if an individual or family member qualifies for Access Long Term Care Systems or A.L.T.C.S. and becomes a member, and in turn qualifies for Pima Care, The programs provides “free” transportation within the county. In other words if the patient lives in Tubac and does not have transportation to seek medical care, the state through the program, will provide transportation to and from the medical care giver for “free”. The contracted shuttle services provider is “SafeRide”

Taxi Services:

There are several local Taxi services within the Nogales community, approximately seven (7). Most or all are Mom and Pop types of services in Nogales and independent contractors not run by the City of Nogales. Most include from 1 to the largest employer three (3) vehicles. Here are some of the specifics. The question was posed to each service as to the cost and number of vehicles and hours of service:

Hernandez Taxi: They have two (2) units that operate from 0700 to 0100, The cost per trip within Nogales is \$6.00 per trip. The cost to Rio Rico from Nogales is \$20.00 per person (one way).

Ochoa Taxi: This taxi service seemed to be the largest, it has three (3) units, it operates 24 hour service. Upon further questioning, it was found that in reality it only provides transportation with one vehicle per shift to cover the 24 hour period of services. Within the Nogales proper the cost is \$6.00 per trip. The cost for one way trip to Rio Rico would cost \$25.00.

Acosta Taxi: This is a one man operation, owned by Vidal Acosta. The hours of service is from 0700 to 2000. Within the Nogales proper the cost is \$6.00. The cost for one way trip to Rio Rico is a flat \$25.00. The caveat with his services is that the cost remains the same up to four (4) person per trip.

City Taxi: They have two (2) units that operates from 0700 to 0100. The cost per trip in surrounding Nogales is \$6.00 per trip. The cost from Nogales to Rio Rico is \$25.00 per trip.

Several others taxi services found did not answer our call. Do not know if in business or out of business.

Observation:

The use of taxi is only advantageous if used within the city. Cost outside the city limits, is very expensive for residents of Nogales. Example is the cost, to Rio Rico, which averages around \$25.00 per trip. The taxi services are limited to day hours. Only one taxi service provides transportation to 1AM and another taxi service provides transportation 24 hours but only has one vehicle!

The shuttle systems in Nogales only provide transportation from Nogales to Tucson and Phoenix. A ride to Rio Rico from the shuttle to Tucson or Phoenix will stop at either Chevron service station or Pilot service station for \$12.00 on route.

The most reasonable cost effective transportation are the use of local buses, unfortunately there is limited services in Nogales and do not have set schedules. They are required to stop at designated “bus stops” which appears to only be three (3) designated areas. This is a concern. City ordinance mandates that buses not make frequent stops along the roads or highways which affect the flow of traffic. One bus services was forced to close their business due to conflict with needs of customers vs. City regulations.

In the event that the new hospital was to be built on Ruby Road, the most advantageous method of transporting people from Nogales proper to new location in Ruby road seems to be by city bus. They carry more people and the cost is minimal about \$1.00 to \$3.00 per trip. It is important to establish a bus stop at the new site...Thus it would become a necessity to provide transportation to the site.

Of the few city bus companies in the Nogales area, there appears to be three (3) that offer service of note. Only Two provided information of value, these are **Compadres** and **Dabdoub** city bus. The one that has the better buses and with six (6) units, is **Dabdoub** city bus. The only issue is that **Dabdoub** city bus is currently not in business due to issues with the City of Nogales. Once these issues are resolved, **Dabdoub** is recommending increasing their routes to include as far as Rio Rico. This initiative will be explored in a scheduled meeting with City officials in August.

Other concerns of note is regulatory compliance, such as insurance. It seems that most independent buses run risks due to lack of liability injury insurance coverage in their services.

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Stakeholder Interview

Name of Interviewee: Olivia Ainz
Agency: Nogales Chamber of Commerce
Date of Interview: June 7, 2006, 8:15AM
Follow-up Needed? No

1. Do you currently use the existing shuttle buses operating within Nogales? How often and for which trips?

No.

2. Do you know people who use the shuttles? If so, who are they? How often do they use the shuttles and for which trips?

Many local employees use the shuttles to get to work.

3. What are the biggest drawbacks of the existing service? (i.e., doesn't go enough places, doesn't operate frequently enough or early/late enough, service is unreliable, cost is inconsistent)

Reliability in keeping to a schedule. This is significantly hampering local businesses. For example, ICT Telemarketing has 500 employees across all their shifts and has 125 openings, because people don't have a reliable way to get to work.

4. Do you know people who would use a different system? Who are they? Would you use a different system?

Local residents would use a reliable

5. If you could make your own system, what would you choose?

a. Where would it go?

Border/Downtown, Grand Avenue, Mariposa Road, Rio Rico (including repack plants).

b. How frequently would it run?

Once per hour.

c. How early would it start and how late would it go?

7AM till 7PM, which would accommodate workers and students.

d. What about weekends and holidays?

Minimal service needed on weekends and holidays for his clients.

e. How much would you pay?

\$1.50 per ride, but discounts should be available.

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Stakeholder Interview

6. If the transit system did everything you listed above, would you use it? How often and for which trips?

Lots of local residents and Mexicans who cross the border daily would use it to get to work every day.

7. If not, could anything be done for you to use transit?

No.

8. Would the service you recommended be the system needed by others in Nogales?

Yes.

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Stakeholder Interview

Name of Interviewee: Laura Ornelas and Hector Bokorquez
Agency: Nogales Public Housing Authority
Date of Interview: May 9, 2006, 1:00PM
Follow-up Needed? No

1. Do you currently use the existing shuttle buses operating within Nogales? How often and for which trips?

Not applicable to these interviewees.

2. Do you know people who use the shuttles? If so, who are they? How often do they use the shuttles and for which trips?

The high cost of gasoline is making affordable housing less affordable, so housing authority clients are starting to use the city's shuttles. Trips generally go from home to work (Mariposa Avenue, border/Downtown), which costs \$6 by taxi and varying prices on the existing shuttles.

3. What are the biggest drawbacks of the existing service? (i.e., doesn't go enough places, doesn't operate frequently enough or early/late enough, service is unreliable, cost is inconsistent)

While the current system carries many people, there are lots of unserved locations. Also, the current buses are old, slow, unreliable, don't have air conditioning, cushions, reliable schedules or clear prices, they're not ADA accessible, they need tinted windows (and windows in general), and drivers who are safety-trained. Nogales' Topography is also a big drawback, as many of the residential areas are steep walks from the main streets.

4. Do you know people who would use a different system? Who are they? Would you use a different system?

People would definitely use a system if it ran reliably and went to more places.

5. If you could make your own system, what would you choose?

a. Where would it go?

Grand Avenue, Morley Avenue, Western Avenue, Mariposa Avenue, border/Downtown, Ruby Road, Carondelet Hospital, Monte Carlo, Chula Vista, Rio Rico, and Tupac.

b. How frequently would it run?

Every thirty minutes during the peak hours; every 1-2 hours off-peak.

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c. How early would it start and how late would it go?

6AM or 7AM till 8PM (later on Saturday night)

d. What about weekends and holidays?

Same as weekdays (though later service).

e. How much would you pay?

Between \$0.75 and \$1.50 per ride, though fares should vary by income. AHA would consider investing/providing discounted transit passes to AHA residents.

6. If the transit system did everything you listed above, would you use it? How often and for which trips?

AHA residents would definitely use it, especially for work and shopping trips.

7. If not, could anything be done for you to use transit?

Not applicable.

8. Would the service you recommended be the system needed by others in Nogales?

Yes. We should also speak to representatives from the schools and the hospital. Additional options to consider include shuttle services to Tucson.

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Stakeholder Interview

Name of Interviewee: Daniel Fontes
Agency: Santa Cruz Valley Unified School District No. 35
Date of Interview: June 7, 2006, 10:00AM
Follow-up Needed? No

1. Do you currently use the existing shuttle buses operating within Nogales? How often and for which trips?

No.

2. Do you know people who use the shuttles? If so, who are they? How often do they use the shuttles and for which trips?

No.

3. What are the biggest drawbacks of the existing service? (i.e., doesn't go enough places, doesn't operate frequently enough or early/late enough, service is unreliable, cost is inconsistent)

Not familiar with the existing services.

4. Do you know people who would use a different system? Who are they? Would you use a different system?

Students who live around Ruby Road, especially those using the Nogales Continuing Technical Education program.

5. If you could make your own system, what would you choose?

a. Where would it go?

Ruby Road, Rio Rico, Tubac, Downtown Nogales.

b. How frequently would it run?

Unsure.

c. How early would it start and how late would it go?

In time so students can get to 7:30AM classes.

d. What about weekends and holidays?

Unsure.

e. How much would you pay?

Unsure, but student discounts should be available.

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Stakeholder Interview

6. If the transit system did everything you listed above, would you use it? How often and for which trips?

Students, especially those without cars, would use it.

7. If not, could anything be done for you to use transit?

No.

8. Would the service you recommended be the system needed by others in Nogales?

Yes. The school system would also be interested in participating in a student discount program.

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Stakeholder Interview

Name of Interviewee: Nils Urman
Agency: Santa Cruz Workforce Connections and Santa Cruz County
Commerce & Economic Development
Date of Interview: May 10, 2006, 8:30AM
Follow-up Needed? No

1. Do you currently use the existing shuttle buses operating within Nogales? How often and for which trips?

No.

2. Do you know people who use the shuttles? If so, who are they? How often do they use the shuttles and for which trips?

Many unemployed residents and Mexican nationals crossing the border every day use the shuttles to get to stores and jobs.

3. What are the biggest drawbacks of the existing service? (i.e., doesn't go enough places, doesn't operate frequently enough or early/late enough, service is unreliable, cost is inconsistent)

Unreliable service (not following a route or schedule) makes it very hard for people to get to work. The current system is also unsafe (specifically the vehicles) and does not serve the community.

4. Do you know people who would use a different system? Who are they? Would you use a different system?

Many people drive, but the cost of gas is becoming prohibitively expensive, so they're trying to provide assistance. They run five vans right now, but reliable transit would be a much better option, so they could stop running their own transportation assistance.

5. If you could make your own system, what would you choose?

a. Where would it go?

Grand Avenue, Downtown, Mariposa Port of Entry, Industrial Area, Old Tucson Road, Meadow Hills, Rio Rico, Monte Carlo, trailer parks at Baffert Drive and Congress Park, Chula Vista, Pete's Kitchen, and new affordable housing near high school, La Palama, La Carmen del Sol, Target Range Road, Casitas Santa Cruz for seniors. Definitely need a Downtown Circulator.

b. How frequently would it run?

Every 20 minutes during the peak hours; hourly in the off-peak.

c. How early would it start and how late would it go?

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6AM till 9PM, with more service depending on industry peaks.

d. What about weekends and holidays?

Same as weekdays (though later service).

e. How much would you pay?

As much as \$2.00 per ride, though discounts and multi-trip passes should be offered.

6. If the transit system did everything you listed above, would you use it? How often and for which trips?

Yes, especially for work and shopping trips for seniors.

7. If not, could anything be done for you to use transit?

Not applicable.

8. Would the service you recommended be the system needed by others in Nogales?

Yes. He'll support the system and encourage his clients and employees to use it.

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Stakeholder Interview

Name of Interviewee: Richard Paco
Agency: SouthEastern Arizona Behavioral Health Services, Inc.
Date of Interview: May 10, 2006, 10:30AM
Follow-up Needed? No

1. Do you currently use the existing shuttle buses operating within Nogales? How often and for which trips?

No.

2. Do you know people who use the shuttles? If so, who are they? How often do they use the shuttles and for which trips?

Very few of his clients use the shuttles. Mr. Paco's agency provides transportation to appointments, which accommodates his client's special needs with special vehicles and drivers with extra training.

3. What are the biggest drawbacks of the existing service? (i.e., doesn't go enough places, doesn't operate frequently enough or early/late enough, service is unreliable, cost is inconsistent)

For his clients, the drawbacks are lack of training, unreliable schedules, and unsafe vehicles.

4. Do you know people who would use a different system? Who are they? Would you use a different system?

His clients would use a system if it was reliable, safe, with well trained drivers.

5. If you could make your own system, what would you choose?

a. Where would it go?

Border/Downtown, Grand Avenue, Western Avenue, Monte Carlo, Morley Avenue, Meadow Hills, Mariposa Road.

b. How frequently would it run?

Every thirty minutes during the peak hours; every 1-2 hours off-peak.

c. How early would it start and how late would it go?

8AM till 9PM, but his clients are up all night and might take advantage of all night service.

d. What about weekends and holidays?

Minimal service needed on weekends and holidays for his clients.

e. How much would you pay?

\$1.00 maximum.

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6. If the transit system did everything you listed above, would you use it? How often and for which trips?

Some of his clients might use it, but no guarantee.

7. If not, could anything be done for you to use transit?

No.

8. Would the service you recommended be the system needed by others in Nogales?

Yes.